

FEBRUARY 2007

- PAGE 2. Imagine Bloomington 2025 by Mayor Winstead.
- PAGE 3. 2007 Budget approved.
- PAGE 4. News you can use.
- PAGE 5. Earth Action Heroes.
- PAGE 6. Parks and Recreation.
- PAGE 7. Arts and culture.
- PAGE 8. Community news.

TAKE THE STEP START YOUR GROUP WALKING

PUBLIC HEALTH AND PARKS AND Recreation, with support from Prevention Minnesota, invite you to have a “moving experience.” Join a movement across Bloomington and Richfield to make walking more fun. Gather friends, family or coworkers and form a walking group. It’ll be the social event of the season with a chance for prizes. For information or to register your group, call 952-563-8877.

POND FAMILY CENTER CELEBRATE DIVERSITY



PARENTS AND CHILDREN OF ALL AGES ARE invited to a multicultural celebration of diversity through art, dance, music, storytelling and food on **Saturday, March 3, 10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.**, at Pond Center, 9600 3rd Ave. S. Bring your own picnic or purchase lunch for a small fee. Festival cost is a \$5 donation per family. The event is sponsored by the Bloomington-Richfield Parent Advisory Council. For more information, call Amanda Crombie at 952-888-0998.

TASTE OF JAPAN MARCH CULTURAL EVENT

JOIN THE BLOOMINGTON SISTER CITY Organization for an evening of cultural activities, a Japanese dinner and a silent and live auction on **Saturday, March 3, 4 - 9 p.m.**, at Bloomington Civic Plaza. For more information, call 952-563-8735 or 952-563-8740 V/TTY.

SCENIC BLOOMINGTON 2007 CALENDARS AVAILABLE



CELEBRATE Bloomington’s beauty year-round with a 2007 calendar, featuring

scenic shots from the community. Purchase calendars for \$5 in Human Resources at Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1800 W. Old Shakopee Road.

CITY MAKES A CLEAN SWEEP A DUSTLESS, WATERLESS WAY TO MAINTAIN STREETS

LEAVES, SAND AND OTHER POLLUTANTS ON STREETS ENTER STORM SEWERS and flow directly to our lakes and rivers. Each spring and fall, Public Works crews sweep more than 350 miles of city streets to keep neighborhoods clean and protect the quality of our water bodies.

The City recently added a dustless, waterless street sweeper to its fleet. Because no water is used, crews can sweep in winter, ridding the streets of excess sand that accumulates from snow and ice control.



Sweeping up loose sand makes streets safer for driving, reduces time spent sweeping in spring and decreases the amount of salt and sediment that reach our water bodies. As the sweeper moves through neighborhoods, a vacuum limits the dust and picks up finer particles that, in the past, would have flowed down storm sewers.



MALL OF AMERICA A STRATEGIC PUBLIC INVESTMENT

IN 1988, THE CITY OF BLOOMINGTON entered into a development contract with the Mall of America Company that included public funding of public improvements equal to 10 percent of the Mall’s development costs over all phases. Public improvements, such as street and utilities, were funded through tax increment financing (TIF), a tool that utilizes a portion of property taxes paid by the Mall to repay the debt issued by the City through its Port Authority.

Bloomington has realized a positive return on its investment in the Mall of America. Additional developments in the vicinity of the Mall added 1,705 hotel rooms and \$83 million to the city’s tax base. The Mall attracted major infrastructure improvements such as light rail that, in turn, are driving the construction of the \$600 million Bloomington Central Station transit-oriented development. In addition, Bloomington’s General Fund receives \$1 million in taxes from the Mall each year

over and above the cost of services. The State of Minnesota also benefits: the Mall generates up to \$32 million per year in state sales tax revenues and pays \$11 million per year in state income taxes and \$5.4 million in property taxes – a total that has reached almost \$50 million per year.

In its initial 1988 agreement with the Mall of America Company, the City and Port Authority developed a formula for funding public improvements for future phases. At that time, it was intended that public improvements related to a second phase of the Mall would be constructed using TIF revenues from both the first



and second phases. However, in 2001, state property tax reform legislation shifted a portion of the commercial property tax receipts directly to the state, reducing revenues to the City for the TIF District by \$5.6 million per year. Due to the delay in the start of the second phase, the City is asking the Legislature for a seven-year extension of the Mall of America Phase II TIF District. The state, as the major beneficiary, will be given the opportunity to invest in maximizing development of the site.

For more information, call Assistant City Manager Clark Arneson at 952-563-8921.

Preliminary development plans have been approved for the Mall’s \$1.4 billion second phase that include a 5.6 million square-foot, integrated, mixed-use center with retail, hotel, office, residential and entertainment uses. This type of high-intensity development, similar to downtown areas in other cities, makes better use of costly infrastructure improvements such as highways, sewers and mass transit. It also attracts a unique blend of tourists and tenants. Without public improvements such as significant structured parking, high-intensity development cannot occur. Structured parking constitutes approximately 60 percent of the on-site public improvements for the second phase of the Mall.

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON
1800 WEST OLD SHAKOPEE ROAD
BLOOMINGTON MN 55431-3027

Presort Std
U.S. Postage
P A I D
Mpls., MN
Permit
#2293

**ECRWSS
POSTAL CUSTOMER**



COMMUNITY OUTREACH RESULTS

By Mayor Gene Winstead

THROUGHOUT LAST FALL, RESIDENTS WERE asked how they see the future of Bloomington. According to comments from a community outreach process, they generally want a clean, green and safe environment.

Topping the list of what residents want for the future are safe and well-maintained neighborhoods. Residents would like to see an increased focus on property maintenance, including enforcement of City codes. According to one respondent, “As an older suburb, it’s very important not to let our city get run down.” Parks and open space are also highly valued by residents who listed maintaining parks and providing stewardship of natural areas as priorities.

Almost 900 people participated in an online survey, community meetings, focus groups and strategic partners meetings to help determine Bloomington’s future for the next 20 years. The most important issues, according to participants’ responses, include crime and safety, transportation and school quality.

Overall, 78 percent of participants in an online survey rated the status of

“Bloomington needs to attract new families with children to allow for continued renewal of our community,” wrote one survey respondent. This sentiment was echoed by several participants, who felt that families with children bring vibrancy to the community. High-quality schools are considered a prerequisite to attracting families. “The existing quality of education is excellent. However, I would place education as the number one priority over the next 20 years,” wrote another resident.



Bloomington the same or better than surrounding cities. When asked about preferences for quality of City services, 84 percent said services should be provided at the same or better quality than other cities.

Many respondents noted that they appreciated the chance to express their thoughts and ideas on Bloomington’s future. The input received from residents will be very helpful as we move forward with strategic planning.

A draft vision for Bloomington was developed from the community outreach process and will be presented to the City Council for approval. The vision centers

on four key concepts: people, neighborhoods, businesses and government.

The next step in the strategic planning process is to finalize a vision statement and identify strategic challenges and initiatives. After this process, goals, objectives and action items will be developed.

Strategic planning updates will be posted on the City’s Web site as the process moves forward. The final mission and vision for Imagine Bloomington 2025 is expected to be completed by late summer 2007.

BRIEFING

Volume 15, Number 1

The *Briefing*, published bimonthly by the City of Bloomington, is mailed to our residents and businesses. Direct comments and requests for Braille, larger print or computer disk to Communications, 1800 W. Old Shakopee Rd., Bloomington MN 55431-3027; PH 952-563-8818; TTY 952-563-8740; FAX 952-563-8715; E-MAIL communityservices@ci.bloomington.mn.us. **Web site: www.ci.bloomington.mn.us**

BLOOMINGTON CITY COUNCIL



Mayor
Gene Winstead
952-888-1258(h)
952-563-8782(w)
gwinstead@ci.bloomington.mn.us

Councilmember At Large
Amy Grady
952-884-6502 (h)
agrady@ci.bloomington.mn.us



Councilmember At Large
Karen Nordstrom
952-831-5221 (h)
knordstrom@ci.bloomington.mn.us

Councilmember District I
Steve Peterson
952-884-3262(h)
speterson@ci.bloomington.mn.us



Councilmember District II
Rod Axtell
952-832-5377(h)
raxtell@ci.bloomington.mn.us

Councilmember District III
Steve Elkins
612-578-2103(c)
selkins@ci.bloomington.mn.us



Councilmember District IV
Vern Wilcox
952-854-1425(h)
vwwilcox@ci.bloomington.mn.us

Elected officials presented for informational purposes.

COUNCILMEMBERS
council@ci.bloomington.mn.us

CITY MANAGER

Mark Bernhardson 952-563-8780
citymanager@ci.bloomington.mn.us

ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER

Clark Arneson 952-563-8921
carneson@ci.bloomington.mn.us

DIRECTORS

Larry Lee, <i>Community Development</i>	952-563-8947
llee@ci.bloomington.mn.us	
Diann Kirby, <i>Community Services</i>	952-563-8717
communityservices@ci.bloomington.mn.us	
Lori Economy-Scholler, <i>Finance</i>	952-563-8791
finance@ci.bloomington.mn.us	
Ulie Seal, <i>Fire</i>	952-881-4062
fire@ci.bloomington.mn.us	
Kent Michaelson, <i>Human Resources</i>	952-563-4898
kmichaelson@ci.bloomington.mn.us	
David Ornstein, <i>Legal</i>	952-563-8753
legal@ci.bloomington.mn.us	
John Laux, <i>Police</i>	952-563-8701
police@ci.bloomington.mn.us	
Charles Honchell, <i>Public Works</i>	952-563-8731
publicworks@ci.bloomington.mn.us	

The City of Bloomington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status or status with regard to public assistance in employment or the provision of services. The City of Bloomington does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs or activities. Upon request, accommodation will be provided to allow individuals with disabilities to participate in all City of Bloomington services, programs and activities. The City has designated coordinators to facilitate compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as required by Section 35.107 of the U.S. Department of Justice Regulations, and to coordinate compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as mandated by Section 8.53 of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Regulations. For information, contact the Human Services Division, City of Bloomington, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington MN 55431-3027; phone: 952-563-8700; TTY: 952-563-8740.

THANK YOU NATIONAL NIGHT OUT PARTICIPANTS! BLOOMINGTON RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD

BLOOMINGTON IS A NATIONAL AWARD winner for outstanding participation in the 23rd Annual National Night Out (NNO) crime, drug and violence prevention program held last August. Our city was recognized as the seventh-best in the nation among cities with populations from 50,000 to 99,999.

Bloomington’s NNO program has received seven consecutive national awards, thanks in part to the efforts of program coordinator and Crime

Prevention Specialist Niki Pierson. Pierson scheduled more than 300 police officers, firefighters and paramedics to visit the registered 350 neighborhood parties in 2006. She also provides information and helps neighborhood block captains select activities for the NNO event, coordinates the annual Block Captains’ Workshop and assists with coordinating the Citizens’ Police Academy.



Police Chief John Laux and Crime Prevention Specialist Niki Pierson accepted the national award for Bloomington.



Only Tap Water Delivers



DID YOU KNOW?

Only 3 percent of the tap water residents use on a typical day is used for drinking. The rest goes for activities such as outdoor watering, bathroom uses and laundering.

MORE THAN A CONVENIENCE

TAP WATER IS CENTRAL TO OUR EVERYDAY LIVES

ANY MEASURE OF A SUCCESSFUL SOCIETY – LOW MORTALITY RATES, ECONOMIC DIVERSITY, productivity, public safety – is in some way related to access to safe water. Tap water does what no other water can do.

Tap water is so intricately part of our lives that we can hardly imagine a day without it. Without tap water, how would we rinse our produce, clean dishes and clothes, water plants and landscapes or wash our cars? Where would we shower? How many businesses would have to suspend operations or relocate entirely? How would our institutions – from hospitals to firehouses to schools – function?

Americans tap into about 341 billion gallons of tap water every day. Total water use, both indoor and outdoor, in a typical single-family home is 101 gallons per capita per day.

Fifteen drips per minute from a leaky faucet adds up to nearly 65 gallons of drinkable water wasted per month. That’s 788 gallons per year!

Presented in cooperation with



2007 CITY PROPERTY TAXES
COUNCIL APPROVES GENERAL FUND BUDGET

IN AN EFFORT TO MAINTAIN QUALITY services at an affordable price, the City Council adopted a General Fund Budget for 2007 of \$49,690,289, an increase that has averaged 3.2 percent per year since 2002.

The City Council approved a General Fund tax levy for 2007 of \$33,720,446. General Fund property taxes have had an average annual increase of 3.76 percent over the past 15 years, from \$20 million in 1992 to \$33.7 million in 2007. In recent years, a state budget deficit affected aid payments to cities. Bloomington did not receive \$6.2 million in market value credit between 2003 and 2007.

Based on the 2007 tax levy, the City’s portion of property taxes – approximately 34 percent – will increase from \$60.56 to \$62.66 per month for the owner of a median-priced, single-family home with a 2006 market value of \$244,800. The median-valued, single-family home increased 5.9 percent in 2006 – a \$13,600 appreciation in asset value of the investment in the home.

Conservative increase

“The City’s strong financial position and conservative spending pattern have helped keep tax increases low,” explained Lori Economy-Scholler, Bloomington Chief Financial Officer. “This is evidenced by the City’s achievement of the highest bond ratings from Standard and Poor’s, Moody’s and Fitch credit rating agencies.”

Home value increases

The median-valued home’s market value has increased at an annual rate of 8.7 percent over the past 10 years, while taxes on that home increased 3.8 percent annually for the same period.

The relative strength of the residential market, along with the impacts from the 2001 tax reform, shifted a greater share of the tax burden from commercial/ industrial and apartment properties to single-family residential properties over the past several years. A slowing residential market, coupled with strengthening commercial/industrial markets and significant new development, may lead to a reversal of this trend and a greater tax burden shift back to commercial/industrial properties.

Responsible budgeting

The City has an ongoing commitment to provide cost-effective services while minimizing increases. Public works, police and fire services account for about 75 percent of the

MONTHLY COST FOR CITY SERVICES
FOR MEDIAN-VALUED, SINGLE-FAMILY HOME

Service type*	2006	2007
Police	\$19.18	\$20.22
Public Works	15.10	17.26
Community Services	8.56	8.85
Debt and capital	4.73	5.40
Fire	4.93	3.62
Community Development	3.16	3.60
Technical Services	2.51	2.54
Strategic Priorities	2.33	1.17
Monthly total for City services	\$60.50	\$62.66
Median home value	\$231,200	\$244,800

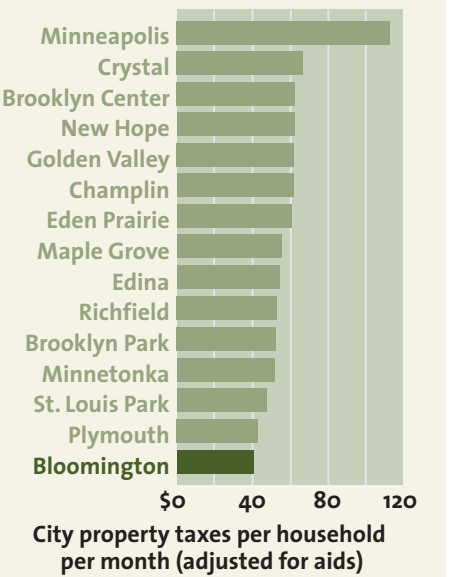
*Revised for final levy.

monthly services for which homeowners pay. *See chart above.*

From 1995 through 2002, utility fees remained unchanged. For 2007, utility fees will increase \$1.81, or 5.3 percent per month, for an annual average increase of 2.5 percent since 1995.

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD COST OF SERVICES IN 2006
FOR 15 HENNEPIN COUNTY CITIES

In a 2006 comparison of 15 communities in Hennepin County with more than 20,000 residents, the average household cost of services in terms of property taxes and property tax aids (when adjusted for Fiscal Disparities) showed Bloomington ranking lowest, with the average household paying \$40.03 per month in property taxes to the City. (The comparison was based on almost 38,000 Bloomington households, including single-family homes, apartments and condominiums.)



NEW PARKING ORDINANCE
REVISED CITYWIDE STANDARDS

IN DECEMBER, THE CITY COUNCIL ADOPTED an ordinance updating Bloomington’s parking standards to reflect the current and future needs of the city. For more information about the requirements described below, call Planning at 952-563-8920 or visit the City’s Web site at www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keywords: parking standards. To report nuisance ordinance violations, call 952-563-8934.



VEHICLE PARKING

1 Vehicles must be parked in the garage, on the driveway or on areas with an approved parking surface such as concrete or asphalt. In certain circumstances, RVs may be stored in the back or side yard.

2 Number of vehicles owned by the residents and parked outside the garage or on the street may not exceed four. This does not include vehicles belonging to visitors.

3 Unlicensed or inoperable vehicles must be stored in a garage or be fully screened from view.

4 Nonresidential vehicles and vehicles longer than 22 feet and/or higher than seven feet six inches may not park in residential areas. However, these vehicles may be parked in the driveway, or in the street where allowed, when rendering a service.

LONG-TERM
ACCOMPLISHMENTS
COMMUNITY SERVICES
DIRECTOR JAMES TRUAX RETIRES

AFTER MORE THAN 36 YEARS OF service with the City, Community



Services Director James Truax retired in January. Truax began his career as

Bloomington’s Health and Social Services Coordinator in 1970. Promoted to Community Services Director in 1974, Truax headed the Communications, Human Services, Parks and Recreation and Public Health divisions, along with the City’s recreational facilities.

Under his leadership, several million dollars in state and regional funding was secured for health and human services programs and to assist with park developments, improvements and acquisitions. Major park projects included Bush Lake Beach renovation in 1996 and Normandale Lake Bandshell in 2001. Other notable accomplishments were Dred Scott and Kelly Playfields, Bloomington Family Aquatic Center, the Central Park and Nine Mile Creek trail system, Galaxy Youth Center and Bloomington Center for the Arts.

Bloomington became a leader in human rights and accessibility on Truax’s watch. Long before federal regulations, the City implemented its own guidelines to ensure people with disabilities had equal access to buildings and services. In 1975, the Architectural Barriers Removal Program was created to give grants to local businesses for accessible entrance ramps and to make playgrounds accessible to all children.

With his encouragement, the City played an instrumental role in supporting Bloomington’s arts programs. This included funding and providing facilities such as the Center for the Arts, home to the Bloomington Fine Arts Council’s eight arts organizations.

Truax said he is proud to have been a part of what Community Services has accomplished over the years.

“The success of quality programs and services has been due to the staff and volunteers who run them,” Truax said. “Human Services has made the community sensitive to human rights and disability issues; our golf courses, ice garden and parks and recreation programs are top drawer; we have one of the best communications divisions in the metro area; and public health, which also serves Edina and Richfield, has had a significant impact in all of southern Hennepin County.”

Diann Kirby began as Bloomington’s Community Services Director on January 20.

Bloomington Sister City Organization
2007 Senshu Marathon Representatives Selected



For the past nine years, Izumi City has invited two Bloomington runners to participate in the Senshu International Marathon in Izumi City, Japan. Tom Anderson, *above*, and Gary Van Cleve, *below*, will represent Bloomington in this world-class event in February 2007.



Anderson works in the City of Bloomington Finance Department. He has run 16 Twin Cities, two Boston and two Dallas White Rock marathons. Van Cleve works for Bloomington-based Larkin Hoffman Daly & Lindgren, LTD in the firm’s Real Estate Litigation Department. A competitive runner in high school and college, he has competed in Grandma’s, a dozen Twin Cities and two Boston marathons.

The standards for the Senshu International Marathon are stringent, including a finish in less than four and one-half hours. Both Anderson and Van Cleve project finishing times of three hours and thirty-five minutes. Bloomington and Izumi City are Sister Cities. For more information, call 952-563-8713 or visit www.bloomington-izumi.org.

What’s at Creekside
Tax Preparation Assistance



Two free income tax assistance programs are available at Creekside, 9801 Penn Ave. S., on a first-come, first-served basis to individuals who meet income-qualifying guidelines. AccountAbility Minnesota provides tax assistance to individuals with incomes of \$25,000 or less and to families with incomes of \$40,000 or less on **Saturdays, February 3 - April 14, 9 a.m. - noon**, and **Tuesdays and Thursdays, January 30 - April 12, 6 - 9 p.m.** AARP Tax-Aide, in partnership with the City of Bloomington, provides tax preparation services to middle- and low-income taxpayers, with special attention to those age 60 and older. Services are **Mondays and Tuesdays, February 5 - April 10 (except February 19), 9 a.m. - noon**. Taxpayers with complex tax returns are advised to seek paid tax assistance.

Federal tax forms are available for photocopying at Creekside.

Going with the Flow of Your Home
Ramblers Easily Adapt to Fit Today’s Needs

Shawn Nelson bought his Bloomington rambler on York Road and 84th Street eight years ago. One of the first projects on the three-bedroom, 1965 home was remodeling the basement. “The right lighting and egress windows made the basement a nice, bright space,” Nelson said. “We have more room and it was a lot less expensive than an addition.” Some features of the 1950s and 1960s ramblers, such as the limited countertop space in Nelson’s original galley-style kitchen, don’t suit homeowners’ needs today. To better fit his lifestyle, he relocated the plumbing so the kitchen and dining room could exchange spaces. “Before, we had to go into the dining room to prepare the food and then bring it back into the kitchen,” Nelson said. “The new design allows for two walls of additional cabinets and room for an island. It also keeps traffic flow outside of the main cooking area.”

In many traditional ramblers, a center wall separates the kitchen from the living room. Nelson, who is president of New Spaces, a Burnsville design/build remodeling company, said removing the wall gave the home an open feel, similar to new homes constructed today. “People are apprehensive about taking out the center wall because it is load-bearing,” Nelson said. “But today, putting a beam in the attic to carry the load and opening the space is commonplace.” By remodeling, Nelson said he has added value to his home and now he really enjoys it. He is a big fan of the rambler. “In terms of the way people live, it’s great,” Nelson said. “The living space can

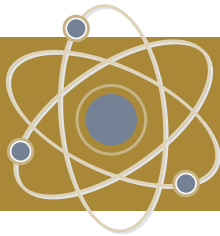


Shawn Nelson’s new kitchen design allows for more cabinets, an island and a cooking area that better suits his needs.



be on one level, which works for people of any age, but especially seniors. You can open up the boxy rooms, which is great for family gatherings or entertaining. The rambler is such an adaptable housing structure.”

Remodels That Work: The Kitchen
Keep a Kitchen Remodel from Looking Dated



Polished granite counters, restaurant-grade stoves, glass mosaic tile – these contemporary hallmarks are found in almost every remodeled kitchen you see, whether in a 1920s bungalow, a 4,000-square-foot home or a modest postwar rambler. But the harvest gold and avocado schemes now considered tacky were plenty popular in their day. One of the best ways to keep a kitchen remodel from looking dated is to make sure it fits the style of the home, not just the style of the times. One family who lives in a 1967 modernist ranch in Portland, Oregon, had high-end 1990s kitchens in their past

few homes, but budget, timeline and a new aesthetic caused them to rethink the same ol’, same ol’. The kitchen in their home came with painted paneling, blue vinyl flooring and ceiling-hung cabinets over a breakfast bar. The family found it to be too dated and depressing, so opted to gut the space. Beneath the flooring was a cement slab that the couple acid stained, sealed and waxed. Despite the husband’s misgivings, they drove three hours to check out cabinetry at IKEA. Prior to that trip they looked at custom cabinets – too expensive, too long a lead time – and standard line – too traditional and unexciting. During Portland’s rainy season, you really don’t want to be outside grilling in a makeshift kitchen. From past projects the couple was confident that they could assemble and install the cabinets and the mass-

- Why This Kitchen Works:**
- Some materials and appliances are straight out of the midcentury playbook: laminate counters, cement floors, wall ovens and cooktops.
 - You don’t have to reinvent the wheel: The layout is similar to the original kitchen designed for the home.
 - Warm wood veneer cabinets keep the stainless appliances, sleek counters and slab floor from looking too cold.



This kitchen’s clean, modernist lines fit the open-plan architecture of the home.



Learn More About Ramblers

Michelle Gringeri-Brown and Jim Brown formerly lived in Edina in a postwar rambler. They publish *Atomic Ranch*, a quarterly magazine devoted to mid-century homes. For information, visit www.atomic-ranch.com.

produced affordability had an additional perk – they could change the look of the kitchen by getting new doors in the future. They chose inexpensive laminate countertops, also from IKEA, leaving more of the budget for a high-quality cooktop, oven, microwave, dishwasher and backsplash tile. The top-mount sink and faucet can be reused if they upgrade to concrete countertops as they may in a few years. The project’s biggest changes were eliminating the overhead cabinets, which opened up the galley kitchen to the family room, and putting the refrigerator where a walk-in pantry had been. A tall cabinet opposite the wall oven now holds pantry items and the refrigerator has the contemporary built-in look of a higher-end brand.

Photo: Jim Brown.

GET READY FOR THE CLEANUP
DISPOSE OF UNWANTED ITEMS



SPRING 2007 CURBSIDE CLEANUP COLLECTION DATES	
<i>If you live:</i>	<i>2007 Curbside pickup is Saturday:</i>
West of Normandale	April 14
Normandale to France	April 21
France to Penn	April 28
Penn to Portland	May 5
East of Portland	May 19

PREVENT ILLEGAL DUMPING AND PROTECT AIR QUALITY
DO NOT PLACE APPLIANCES AT CURB UNTIL PICKUP DAY

WINDOW AIR CONDITIONERS AND DEHUMIDIFIERS SET OUT AT THE CURB ARE TARGETS for people who take copper wire from the appliances to sell. It is illegal to cut the copper wire in appliances because it releases toxic pollutants, such as Freon, into the air. An appliance set out for the Cleanup is often taken to a park or other location, stripped of the wire and abandoned or dumped on someone else’s property.

To help prevent illegal dumping and to protect air quality, do not set out smaller appliances that contain Freon (air conditioners and dehumidifiers) until 7 a.m. on the day of your pick up. For more information, call 952-563-8751.



2007 CITYWIDE GARAGE SALES
HOLD A SALE THIS SPRING

THE BLOOMINGTON OPTIMIST YOUTH FOUNDATION presents the Citywide Garage Sales this spring. The event will be held **Thursday - Saturday, May 31 - June 2**. Watch for more details in the April *Briefing*. For more information, call Jim Meyers at 952-831-3798 or visit www.bloomingtonoptimists.org.

COMMUTER CHOICE AWARD
COMMITTED TO EXPANDING COMMUTER OPTIONS

THE CITY OF BLOOMINGTON WAS HONORED WITH A COMMUTER CHOICE AWARD FROM Metro Transit for providing innovative solutions that get people to work without adding to traffic congestion.

In her nomination letter, 494 Commuter Services’ Melissa Madison praised the City for promoting alternate commuting options to City staff, residents and employers, and for being a pioneer in transit-oriented development with the Bloomington Central Station project. The City was also recognized for creating a bicycle trail map and for working with adjoining cities to improve connections to enhance bicycle and pedestrian movement.

INCREASE PROPERTY VALUE, PLANT A TREE
CITY TREE SALE THIS SPRING

EACH YEAR, THE CITY PLANTS TREES IN PARKS AND OTHER PUBLIC areas to ensure that Bloomington’s urban forest continues to be one of the community’s many treasures. The City has planted more than 1,000 trees over the last few years.

Most of the 1,850 diseased elm and oak trees marked for removal last year were located on residential lots. To increase the number of trees on private properties, Park Maintenance will hold a public tree sale.

Based on last year’s sales of just over 200 trees, approximately 220 trees will be for sale this spring. Species of trees available include: Autumn Blaze Maples; Northwoods Red Maples; Hackberries; Bur Oaks and Swamp White Oaks. Orders will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis.

To purchase a tree, fill out the form below and mail it, along with a check payable to the City of Bloomington. To download the form, visit the City’s Web site at www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keywords: Tree sale.



TREE ORDER FORM

Bloomington residents only. Trees are bare root, one-and-a-quarter to one-and-a-half inches in diameter. (Trees are not guaranteed.)

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Fill in number of each tree type desired. Maximum 5 trees total per household, \$50 each. Check must accompany order.	_____ Swamp White Oak	_____ Bur Oak	_____ Hackberry
	_____ Northwoods Rubrum (Red) Maple	_____ Autumn Blaze Maple	
	Total trees _____ X \$50 ea. = \$ _____ Total cost		

Pick up trees at 1800 W. Old Shakopee Road on **Saturday, May 5, 9 - 11 a.m.**

Send check and form to City of Bloomington, Park Maintenance, 1800 W. Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington MN 55431-3027.

Healthy people and a healthy environment make a difference in Bloomington. Here are your neighbors in action ...



EARTH ACTION
HEROES
THE NUTRITION COALITION

PART OF A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT IS healthy people. Elements of a healthy lifestyle – a diet that includes fruits and vegetables, whole grains, dairy and protein, in addition to exercise – begin at a young age. Parents are the first people responsible for nutrition, passing on good eating behaviors to their children that can last a lifetime.

To increase communication and educate parents, students and families, representatives from the Parent Teacher Student Association and the Bloomington School District, along with parents from diverse ethnic backgrounds and Bloomington Public Health, developed a healthy snacks brochure. Distributed to all families of elementary school children at the beginning of the school year, the brochure was translated into four languages.

Dr. Janet Pladson, Bloomington Public Schools Assistant Superintendent for Academic Services, said the goal of the brochure is to give parents ideas of what healthy foods to send with their kids to school.

“Parents can make snacks and lunches that are healthy and still satisfy students,” Pladson said. “The healthy food choices are also low cost and easy for busy families.”

Nutrition expert and Public Health Specialist Joan Bulfer said the brochure is part of a school wellness policy to address the child obesity epidemic.

“There is concern for the 15 percent of kids who are overweight,” Bulfer said. “But even if a child is not overweight, it doesn’t mean they’re eating right.”

CREATE LESS WASTE
PACK A NO-WASTE LUNCH

Pack healthy food choices in a no-waste lunch. Buy food items in bulk and put them in reusable containers for your child to carry to school. You can also use reusable lunch boxes or bags and washable cloth napkins. By packing food in reusable containers you create less waste. It is also typically less expensive than buying food that comes in disposable containers.

Source: Minnesota Office of Environmental Assistance



Research shows that good nutrition and plenty of physical activity are linked to better behavior and academic performance. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, school nutrition education can improve dietary practices that affect children’s health, growth and intellectual development.

Parent Liz Weatherhead said she welcomed the brochure and taped it to the refrigerator so that she and her elementary-age children could make healthy food choices together. She said the brochure has helped broaden her family’s choices; instead of potato chips, they eat cucumbers with dip.

“As a parent I try to make good choices, but having a reminder from the school is wonderful,” Weatherhead said. “I am pleased the school is stepping up to the plate and helping me contribute to my kids’ wellness.”

For more information, call 952-681-6477, or to download a brochure, visit the City’s Web site at www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keywords: School food.

TENNIS LESSONS

INDOOR WINTER TENNIS LESSONS FOR beginner and intermediate levels will be offered in collaboration with 98th Street Northwest Athletic Club.

When: Thursdays, February 15 - March 22.

Times: *Beginner* 7 - 8 p.m.
 Intermed. 8 - 9 p.m.

Where: 98th Street Northwest Athletic Club.

 To register or for information, call Parks and Recreation.

DAYTIME VOLLEYBALL

EXERCISE AND ENJOY VOLLEYBALL YEAR-round. Teams form each time you play.

When: Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Where: Bloomington National Guard Armory, 3300 W. 98th St.

Time: *Beginner* 9 - 11 a.m.
 Intermed. 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Cost: \$2 each session.

SENIOR VOLLEYBALL LEAGUE

THE BORN AGAIN JOCKS VOLLEYBALL League welcomes men, 55 years and over, with all levels of playing ability. For more information, call Dick Wortman at 952-888-1814.

When: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

Time: *Warm-up* 8:45 a.m.
 Games 9 a.m.

Where: Jefferson and Kennedy High Schools.

MEN’S, WOMEN’S AND CO-REC SOFTBALL

When: One evening per week, starting April 28.

Where: Valley View and Dred Scott playfields.

Cost per team: \$535 - Recreation
 \$760 - Fast pitch and doubleheader.

Deadline: March 9.

PLAY BALL!

TIME TO GEAR UP FOR A SEASON OF ADULT softball. More than 300 teams compete throughout the summer and fall.

Hosted at the Dred Scott and Valley View Playfields, leagues are for adults, ages 18 and older.

Divisions include men’s, men’s fast pitch, women’s and co-rec.

Leagues form in March and play May through July. Teams are sanctioned in both Minnesota softball associations, the ASA and USSSA.

Play ranges from competitive to recreational levels.

For more information, call Recreation Supervisor Jason Hicks at 952-563-888o. or e-mail jhicks@ci.bloomington.mn.us.

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

BLOOMINGTON LOVES ITS KIDS
CARNIVAL HIGHLIGHTS MONTH-LONG CELEBRATION

When: Saturday, February 24, 12:30 - 3:30 p.m.

Where: Northwestern Health Sciences University, 84th St. and Penn Ave.

BLOOMINGTON LOVES ITS KIDS (BLIK) IS A MONTH-LONG CELEBRATION THAT COMBINES community and family fun with educational programs and recognition events for kids. The BLIK Carnival features games, face painting and dancing, along with family-friendly entertainment. Parents can browse the educational booths and learn about what businesses and organizations have to offer kids in Bloomington.



SPRING EGG HUNT
FOR CHILDREN, AGES 8 AND UNDER

When: Saturday, April 7, 9:30 a.m. - noon

Where: Northwestern Health Sciences University, 84th and Penn Ave.

Time: Activities begin 9:30 a.m., hunt 11 a.m.

ENJOY SNACKS, GAMES, PHOTOS WITH THE BUNNY, entertainment and more. This “eggs”traordinary annual event is sponsored by Northwestern Health Sciences University, Parks and Recreation and the Bloomington Breakfast Optimist Club.

SUMMER SPECTRUM
REGISTER ONLINE MARCH 24

REGISTRATION FOR YOUTH PROGRAMS will soon be a few clicks away.

Beginning **Saturday, March 24**, sign up online for Summer Spectrum, Camp Kota, playgrounds and field trips. Preregister at least two days in advance to receive a username and password that will be needed to register through the new Online Program Service. To preregister and check out the service, visit the City’s Web site at www.ci.bloomington.mn.us.

New! Team schedules, standings and game scores are now online. Go to www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keyword: team schedules.

SUPER SIGN-UP SATURDAY

When: Saturday, March 24, 9 - 11 a.m.

Where: Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1800 W. Old Shakopee Road.

Registration by mail, fax or in person is available at Super Sign-Up Saturday and later dates. Look for the Summer Spectrum brochure mailed in late March. Call Parks and Recreation for information or visit www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keyword: Spectrum.

GALAXY YOUTH CENTER

Where: Valley View Middle School, 8900 Portland Ave.

Hours: Monday - Friday 2:20 - 6 p.m.
 Bus home: 4:30 p.m., 5:30 p.m.

Where: Oak Grove Middle School, 1300 W. 106th St.

Olson Middle School, 4551 W. 102nd St.

Hours: Monday - Friday 2:20 - 5 p.m.
 Bus home: 4: 30 p.m.

Cost: \$1 daily.

GALAXY YOUTH CENTERS SERVE YOUTH IN GRADES 6 THROUGH 8 WHO LIVE OR GO TO school in Bloomington. Galaxy provides recreation, enrichment, developmental programming and help with homework. For more information, call 952-681-6124.



OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS
QUALE INDUCTED INTO USSSA HALL OF FAME

PARKS AND RECREATION MANAGER RANDY QUALE WAS inducted into Minnesota’s United States Specialty Sports Association Hall of Fame (USSSA) in January for his outstanding contributions to the association as an administrator for adult softball.

According to Minnesota USSSA Commissioner Gerry Turnberg, Quale has done a fantastic job promoting and administrating USSSA programs. Turnberg said, “Randy has represented our association with outstanding professionalism.”

Quale, who has more than 20 years of municipal parks and recreation service, has been with the City almost 10 years. He oversees Bloomington’s parks and recreation programs, including adult sports. With more than 360 teams, Bloomington has one of the state’s largest municipal adult softball programs.

Quale has coached high school football for 26 years and participated in adult softball for many years. He is also president of the Minnesota Recreation and Park Association.



ADAPTIVE RECREATION AND LEARNING Exchange (AR&LE) offers recreational, leisure and community education programs that are specifically designed to meet the needs of people with disabilities in the cities of Bloomington, Eden Prairie, Edina and Richfield. For information, call Parks and Recreation or visit www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keywords: Adaptive Recreation.

Inclusion services provided

Under the direction of the Assistant Parks and Recreation Manager, inclusion services allow participants with disabilities to fully participate in Parks and Recreation programs. For more information, call Parks and Recreation or e-mail parksrec@ci.bloomington.mn.us.

LOOK AHEAD

PLAN YOUR EVENT
PICNIC SHELTERS AVAILABLE FOR RENT



PICNIC SHELTERS ARE AVAILABLE TO RENT for picnics, receptions, reunions or meetings. Register now for use April through mid-October. Shelters have electricity, grills, restrooms and drinking fountains. In addition, City parks offer playground equipment, volleyball and horseshoe courts, walking trails and softball fields. Reduced rates are available for nonprofit Bloomington youth groups.

MOIR PARK

104th St. at Morgan Ave.

Shelter 1: Accommodates 200+.
 \$190 + tax.

Shelter 2: Accommodates 50.
 \$130 + tax.

WEST BUSH LAKE PARK

94th St. at West Bush Lake Road.

Shelter 1: Accommodates 200.
 \$190 + tax.

Shelter 2: Accommodates 150.
 \$130 + tax.

EAST BUSH LAKE PARK

9140 East Bush Lake Road.

Shelter 3: Accommodates 200.
 \$250 + tax.

SMITH PARK

8155 Park Ave. S.

Shelter: Accommodates 30.
 \$82 + tax.

CENTER FOR THE ARTS

LOCATED IN BLOOMINGTON CIVIC PLAZA AT THE CORNER OF WEST 98TH STREET AND Old Shakopee Road, the Center for the Arts is a first-class facility housing eight arts organizations. For facility information, call 952-563-8889. For exhibit information and events, call 952-563-8567 or visit the City's Web site, www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keyword: Calendar.

ART NEVER TASTED THIS GOOD!



TASTE of CHOCOLATE

BENEFITTING THE BLOOMINGTON FINE ARTS COUNCIL

Sunday, March 11, 1 - 5 p.m.
Bloomington Center for the Arts
1800 W. Old Shakopee Road

MIDWEST DESSERT COMPETITION

PRESENTED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH the Bloomington Chamber of Commerce and sponsored by *Minnesota Monthly*, The Toro Company and HealthPartners.

- Sample savory chocolates.
- 17 chefs and chocolatiers.
- Entertainment by arts organizations.
- Huge silent auction.
- Raffle for fabulous prizes.
- Best chocolate dessert and confection awards.

Featuring chocolates by:

B.T. McElrath, Blue Water Grill – Hilton Airport, California Café/Napa Valley Grille, Corner Table, Creative Candies, Creative Confectionaire, Dippin' Chocolates, For Goodness Cakes, Legacy Chocolates, The Marsh, Mr. B. Chocolatier, Muddy Paws Cheesecake, River Chocolate Company, Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory, Seasons at Dolce Oak Ridge, Truffle Hill Chocolates, Truffles & Tortes.

Tickets are \$20 in advance; \$25 at the door. For information or for tickets, call 952-563-8567 or visit www.tasteofchocolate.org.

BLACK BOX THEATER

GALLERY THEATER COMPANY

The Agatha Christie mystery, **Murder on the Nile**, will be performed **Thursdays - Saturdays, 7:30 pm**, and **Sundays, 2 p.m., February 15 - March 4**. The **Saturday, March 3** performance is ASL interpreted and begins at **1 p.m.** For tickets, call 952-563-8587 or visit www.bloomingtonartcenter.com.

EXHIBITIONS

BLOOMINGTON ART CENTER (BAC)

952-563-8587

INEZ GREENBERG GALLERY

Naturally Inspired, featuring artists Eleanor McGough and Eun-Kyung Suh, runs **through February 16**.

Memento Mundi, featuring artists Leslie Anderson, Terry Genesen-Becker, Donna Getsinger, Dale Kennedy and John Pearson, runs **February 23 - March 30**. Artists' reception will be held Friday, February 23, 6 - 8 p.m.



"Tulips" by Donna Getsinger.

GALLERY HOURS

Monday - Friday	8 a.m. - 10 p.m.
Saturday	9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sunday	1 p.m. - 10 p.m.



"Gina" by Todd Bridigum.

CLASSROOM HALLWAY, SECOND FLOOR

Year of Cezanne trip exhibition, featuring works from an art education trip to France, runs **March 2 - May 4**.

ATRIUM GALLERY, SECOND FLOOR

Water Garden: Paintings & Prints, featuring artist Clara Ueland, runs **February 15 - March 25**.

Intaglio! – An Educational Exhibition, featuring artist Todd Bridigum, runs **March 29 - May 6**. Artist reception is Friday, March 30, 6 - 8 p.m.

SCHNEIDER THEATER

BLOOMINGTON CIVIC THEATER



An original musical revue by Artistic Director John Command runs **February 2 - 25**. Join singers and dancers as they pull out all the stops in a toe-stomping review of productions, past and present. For tickets, visit www.bloomingtoncivictheater.org or call 952-563-8575.



THURSDAY MUSICAL

The Thursday Morning Artist Series classical music concerts are performed

on **Thursdays, February 8 and 22, March 8, 22 and 29, 10:30 a.m.** Concerts feature four musicians, instrumentalists and singers, performing an exceptional repertoire. Tickets are \$10 adults; \$6 for students. Season tickets are \$60; \$50 for seniors. Brochures are available at the Center for the Arts. For more information, call 612-333-0313 or visit www.thursdaymusical.com.

MEDALIST CONCERT BAND



The Medalist Concert Band with Conductor Jerry Luckhardt will perform **Footlifters!**, American marches by Henry Fillmore and Karl King, and fiery Armenian and Latin favorites on **Monday, February 12, 7:30 p.m.** For tickets, call 952-563-8575 or visit www.bloomingtoncivictheatre.org. Tickets are \$10 adults; \$8 students/seniors in advance; \$12 adults; \$10 students/seniors at the door.

BLOOMINGTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

"No Strings Attached" Chamber Concert will be performed by the Bloomington Symphony Orchestra on **Sunday, March 4, 3 p.m.** No cost to attend.

CONTINENTAL BALLET COMPANY

Swan Lake, the most revered of the classical ballets, will be performed **Saturdays,**

March 24 and 31, 7:30 p.m., and Sundays, March 25 and April 1, 3 p.m. For tickets, visit www.continentalballet.com or call 952-563-8562.



CIVIC PLAZA LOBBY

BAC WRITERS' FESTIVAL AND BOOK FAIR

Workshops, a book fair, readings and panel discussions are featured at this celebration of the literary arts on **Saturday, March 24, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.**



REHEARSAL HALL

NOTE-ABLE SINGERS

Note-able Singers invite women of all ages to sing along at rehearsals on **Tuesdays, 6:30 - 9 p.m.**, and explore the possibility of joining this dynamic show choir. For more information, call Director Judy Nurkkala at 952-831-1662.



MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN VIDEO production? Do you have a topic you're passionate about? Maybe it's time to produce your own TV show. Bloomington Community Access Television (BCAT) is the place to make that happen.

BCAT members have access to professional equipment and training. The facility boasts a broadcast studio with three cameras, a control room, two edit suites, four video cameras, tripods, microphones and more. Classes on how to use the equipment are also offered.

Make your voice heard. Music videos, talk shows, documentaries, discussion groups, narratives, community events, classes, spoken word, educational programs – whatever you create – will air on Bloomington Cable Channel 16. Membership is \$45 for individuals, \$15 for students and \$100 for organizations.

BCAT is located on the second floor of Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1800 W. Old Shakopee Road. For more information, visit www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keywords: BCAT, or call Jenny Hanson at 952-563-4980.





SPRUCE UP YOUR HOME HOME IMPROVEMENT LOANS

THE BLOOMINGTON HOUSING AND Redevelopment Authority (HRA) will be accepting applications through March 30 for its Home Improvement Deferred Loan Program.

Loans of up to \$35,000 are available to Bloomington homeowners. There are no monthly payments. Repayment occurs when the home is sold, transferred or conveyed. Interest is charged at an annual rate of 5 percent of the original loan principal for the first 10 years. No additional interest accrues after 10 years.

A lead risk assessment is required for all homes built before 1978.

Loans are offered to help maintain the condition of housing and neighborhoods. Applications are ranked and processed according to need.

Eligible repairs include replacement of roofs, electrical and plumbing systems, gutters, windows, doors, insulation, siding, soffits and fascia, exterior painting and foundation, sidewalk or step repairs.

Ineligible repairs include decorating, additions, finishing basements, remodeling and garage construction. Homeowner labor is no longer permitted, due to federal lead paint regulations.

To apply for a Home Improvement Deferred Loan, you must be the owner-occupant of your home and have sufficient equity to cover the loan amount. *Income guidelines apply. See table below.*

INCOME GUIDELINES

Persons in household*	Maximum gross income**
1	\$41,700
2	\$47,700
3	\$53,650
4	\$59,600
5	\$64,350
6	\$69,150
7	\$73,900
8 or more	\$78,650

* Includes all residents of household, related and unrelated, including renters.

** Subject to change.



Loan applications will be accepted at the HRA office at Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1800 W. Old Shakopee Road, until Friday, March 30. For more information or to receive an application, call 952-563-8937.

COMMUNITY NEWS

PARKS AND OPEN SPACES A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE of Bloomington's parks is underway. The City is currently undertaking a comprehensive update of Bloomington's Park Master Plan that will establish:

- A 20-year vision for park, recreation, open space, cultural and historical preservation, public art, and trail and bikeway systems.
- A detailed vision implementation program that includes estimated annual costs and funding sources.
- Capital funding priorities for park improvements and acquisitions.
- Programming priorities for recreation, historical and cultural systems.
- Policies and priorities for preserving natural features and amenities.

A focus group session was held last December to prioritize key issues and opportunities for the update of the Park Master Plan. In January, the City Council formed a Citizen's Task Force that will meet throughout the year to provide input on park and program needs, financing of park improvements and acquisitions, and needs for additional park facilities.

To gather public input, a community open house will be held on **Thursday, March 1, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.**, in the Council Chambers at Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1800 W. Old Shakopee Road. Public input will also be solicited via an online survey and park stakeholder meetings. A draft Park Master Plan will be reviewed at a community open house later this summer.



For more information, call Randy Quale, Parks and Recreation Manager, at 952-563-8877, e-mail parksrec@ci.bloomington.mn.us or visit the City's Web site at www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keywords: Park Master Plan.



BLOOMINGTON YESTERDAY

LONG MEADOW GUN CLUB - 1903



Minnesota Historical Society

AT THE TURN OF THE LAST CENTURY, LONG MEADOW GUN CLUB WAS A LANDMARK near the Minnesota River bottoms in Bloomington. It overlooked Long Meadow Lake, a 1,500-acre, shallow lake located on the Minnesota River east of the Cedar Avenue Bridge. Long Meadow Lake has long been a favorite for bird-watchers. Dr. Thomas Roberts (1858 - 1946), former director of the Museum of Natural History, regularly sponsored Memorial Day field trips and chicken dinners to the Long Meadow Gun Club to mark the end of his ornithology classes. Dr. Roberts studied birds found near the Gun Club, including the yellow-headed blackbird.

PASSPORT SERVICES NOW AVAILABLE AT CIVIC PLAZA



ARE THERE TRAVEL plans in your future? Will you need a passport? The City Clerk's Office, located in Bloomington Civic Plaza,

1800 W. Old Shakopee Road, is now a designated Passport Acceptance Agent.

Due to new federal Homeland Security regulations, the City was unable to continue offering passport services at Motor Vehicle. The new service at Civic Plaza will again provide access for citizens who live or work in Bloomington. Passport service hours are Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Passport photo service is also available.

For information, call 952-563-8700 or visit www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keyword: Passport. For application forms, information on documentation required, fees, and other passport and international travel information, visit www.travel.state.gov.

CONTINUING SERVICE SEAL BECOMES FULL-TIME CHIEF

FIRE CHIEF

Ulrie Seal was recently appointed to serve as Bloomington's full-time chief. Seal oversees the



Fire Department's operations and 135 volunteer firefighters. With Seal's appointment, Bloomington joins the cities of Apple Valley, Eagan, Eden Prairie, Lakeville and Savage that have all-volunteer fire departments with full-time chiefs.

Seal has more than 30 years in fire service. He has been a member of Bloomington's Fire Department since 1976, serving as firefighter, captain, deputy chief and chief. He was also a full-time member of the Minneapolis Fire Department for 26 years where he served as firefighter, captain, battalion chief, deputy chief and assistant chief.

In 2003, Bloomington Rotary Daymakers honored Seal with the Daymaker of the Year Award, calling him a "renowned expert" in technical rescue, hazardous materials and weapons of mass destruction. Seal also earned the professional designation of "Chief Fire Officer" by the International Association of Fire Chiefs, one of approximately 200 fire chiefs throughout the country to receive this designation.

Seal said serving in a full-time capacity will enable him to further enhance service to the community.

"I look forward to addressing the challenges that the Fire Department will face in the coming years," Seal said. "I will be able to expand my work in emergency preparedness, which includes working on disaster response and disease outbreaks."

Seal began as full-time Fire Chief on February 1.